GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

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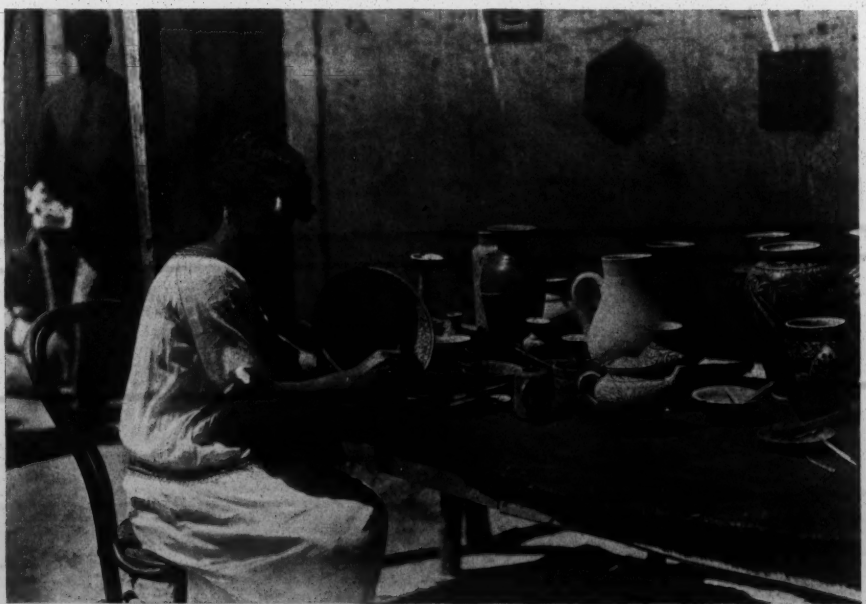
NOTE TO TEACHERS: Owing to the Christmas and New Year holidays the next issue of the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS will appear January 8, 1934.



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REVIVING AN ALMOST FORGOTTEN ART IN PALESTINE

New highways, model villages, hotels, and industries are not the only things that have altered the face of the "Home of Christmas" in recent years. Metal work, painting, and ceramics (above) are being taught in schools that develop ancient patterns along modern lines (See Bulletin No. 1).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

The Geographic News Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (in stamps or money order). Entered as second-class matter, January 27, 1922, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized February 9, 1922.

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Palestine, Land of Christmas, and New Industries

CHRISTMAS turns our thoughts to Palestine, with its picturesque tribesmen and shepherds, gardens and wells, and villages and cities, so intimately associated with the life of Christ.

Recently, however, Palestine has been in the news in connection with trouble between Arabs and colonists, which also brought to general attention the fact that Palestine is one of the few bright spots on the world economic map.

While nearly every other country has been feeling the effects of world-wide trade depression, Palestine has been absorbing thousands of Jewish immigrants each year, and, as a result, building construction, agriculture, and industry have boomed. Altogether, more than 600 new industries have sprung up throughout Palestine since the World War. Everywhere, from Dan to Beersheba, wheels are turning and machines are pouring out manufactured goods of many kinds.

Once Noted Only for Relics of the Past

Palestine was slumbering a little more than a decade ago when Jewish colonists began to pour into the region under the Zionist movement. Aside from the orange-growing and wine-producing industries, there was little activity. The traveler then saw the ancient land as a region of scant interest except for its historic landmarks. Poor people huddled in straggling, unkempt villages; rivers and fertile plains and valleys were neglected; crops little more than returned seed to farmers who tilled their fields with crooked-stick plows, and trade was stagnant.

But the Palestine of 1933 is far different. The returned traveler finds that Jewish colonists and Jewish money have been economic tonics, and that Palestine has awakened. Even venerable Jerusalem seems to have taken a new lease on life. Bustling street crowds, the sound of carpenters' hammers and masons' trowels, the changing skyline with multi-storied buildings rising above the flat roof tops of more ancient structures, the laughter of gay diners in modern cafés, and the gayly-billboarded new "movie" houses proclaim that this historic old city, at least, no longer basks entirely in the light of a glorious past.

Christian, Hebrew and Moslem pilgrims still visit their Holy city as they have visited it for centuries; but Jerusalem merchants now cater to men who come to temples of trade as well as to those who seek temples of religion.

Historic Jordan River Makes Electricity

As a traveler rides in bus or private motor car in Palestine to-day, he finds it hard to believe that before the World War Palestine roads were mere tracks and automobiles were strange transports that most of the people had never seen. An hour after driving from Jerusalem he can stand on the banks of the Jordan River. Incidentally that historic stream, harnessed near the Sea of Galilee, generates electricity for light and power throughout a large part of Palestine. Even the Dead Sea has been put to profitable use. Although it has never supported a fisherman (fish cannot live in the intensely salt water), it now supports a huge salt-producing industry, and scientists have discovered in its waters abundant supplies of other useful chemicals.

The more than 100 new settlements that immigrant Jews have built are spread over a wide area of Palestine, but the influence of the newcomers is most noticeable along the coastal plain. North of Jaffa, they have created a beautiful modern city, Tel-Aviv, in what was once a region of sand dunes. A decade ago, Tel-Aviv was

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A SAN BLAS INDIAN "VENICE" ALONG THE CARIBBEAN COAST OF PANAMA

The San Blas, purest of all Indian strains, build their villages on islets and travel to the mainland to work their gardens, hunt, or trade with other Indians and whites. Fishing, however, is the chief occupation of the San Blas Indian. He makes his own turtle spears and sells turtle shell, or "plates" to Panama traders. The dark shadow (left) is that of the airplane from which this view was taken (See Bulletin No. 4).

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"South Latitude 78° 35′; West Longitude 163° 40′"

LATITUDE and longitude have invaded the U. S. Post Office Department. One day last month a large envelope bearing an emblem of the American eagle (somewhat like that on the back of a half-dollar) and addressed to "South Latitude 78° 35′; West Longitude 163° 40′" was dropped in the mails at the Washington, D. C., Post Office.

There was no return address and no other clue as to the intended destination of the letter. Postal clerks are not mind readers, and, while they discourage cryptic addresses as wasters of time and money, they never send any letter to the Dead Letter Office until every possible means of locating the addressee has been exhausted.

Enter geography! By consulting a world map, the Washington sorting clerks soon learned that such an address would have to be somewhere in the south polar regions. Closer examination revealed that this latitude and longitude mark the very spot where Admiral Byrd will soon establish his base camp—on the site of the Little America of his first Antarctic Expedition.

More than 52,000 Letters Sent

This strangely-addressed piece of first-class matter is only one of more than 52,000 letters that have been sent to Little America since the Post Office Department announced the establishment of the world's southernmost Post Office at Little America, Antarctica, and appointed Dr. John Oliver La Gorce, vice-president of the National Geographic Society and associate editor of the *National Geographic Magazine*, as postmaster.

More than 33,000 letters were taken aboard the Byrd flagship, in Norfolk, Virginia, before sailing, and since then another 19,000 letters have been forwarded by regular steamship lines via Vancouver, B. C., to Wellington, N. Z., the latter being Admiral Byrd's last stop before leaving for the Antarctic. All letters that left the eastern part of the United States by December 6 will be received in New Zealand in time to go forward with the expedition, which is scheduled to sail for Little America January 1, 1934.

But these are not the only letters eligible to receive the "Little America" cancellation. Letters will be received until further notice by the Post Office Department for the second cancellation, and will be forwarded to Little America when the supply ship returns to New Zealand and makes its second journey to Little America. They will be returned to the United States in the early summer of 1935.

Expedition officials suggest that mailings for the second cancellation be made as early as possible. Ice conditions may make it impossible to fix the date of the second trip of the supply vessel far in advance. Letters will be dispatched to New Zealand in the order of receipt at Washington.

Same Charge for Second Cancellation

Letters for the second cancellation series will be received on the same terms as those for the first cancellation. To meet the expenses of transporting mail to and from the United States and its handling, a charge of 53 cents is made for each letter, including a special stamp issued by the Government in honor of the Byrd Expedition.

The Post Office Department receives only three cents, and the Expedition the fifty cents on each letter. Stamp collectors are thus given an opportunity to become, in a small way, patrons of exploration.

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a straggling town of 2,000 inhabitants. Now it seethes with commercial and industrial activity and is the home of some 60,000 people. Behind the walls of its industrial buildings, one sees bricks, textiles, shoes, pocketbooks, candy, syrups, dresses, machinery, and many other articles in the making.

The outstanding harbor improvement in Palestine has been at Haifa. Of little consequence a few years ago, Haifa now is likely to overtake Beyrouth and to become the busiest port at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. A mile and a half of main breakwater has been constructed, and sand dredged from the harbor has been used for the reclamation of a new seaside area which will be utilized for railroad spurs.

New quays have been built, and ocean-going vessels can now anchor opposite the city. The harbor could take care of five times as much shipping as Beyrouth and nearly as much as Marseilles. Haifa City, too, has been renovized, and greater expansion is planned. Already the port is served by two railroads, good roads radiate from it into the interior, and a pipeline from Iraq will soon pour oil into huge tanks near the waterfront that will store it for export. Ultimately, it is believed that Haifa will be the chief westward-looking port of the Near East for 46,000,000 people.

Note: The *National Geographic Magazine* has published several articles recapturing the charm and color of ancient Palestine. Several of these are illustrated with beautiful natural-color photographs. For supplementary reading about the "Land of Christmas" see: "The Road of the Crusades," *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1933; "Crusader Castles of the Near East," March, 1931; "Bethlehem and the Christmas Story," December, 1929; "The Pageant of Jerusalem," December, 1927; "Skirting the Shores of Sunrise," December, 1926; "Among the Bethlehem Shepherds," December, 1926; "Flying over Egypt, Sinai, and Palestine," September, 1926; "Sun-painted Scenes in the Near East," November, 1925; "Adventures with a Camera in Many Lands," July, 1921; "From London to Australia by Aeroplane," March, 1921; "The Last Israelitish Blood Sacrifice," January, 1920; and "An Old Jewel in the Proper Setting," October, 1918.

Photograph by Alexander Stewart

ISRAEL STILL WEEPS AT THE WAILING WALL

Scene of several recent disturbances between Arabs and Jews, this fragment of the great temple of Solomon in Jerusalem is the gathering place of Jews from many lands They join in replying "We sit alone and weep" as the cantor chants, "Because of the palace which lies desolate" and "Because of the Temple which is destroyed."

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Japanese May Desert "Tidal Wave Coast" of Honshu

MAN has not yet found any way to deal with tidal waves—those immense combers that sweep tons of sea water without warning against coastal settlements that are usually well above the reach of even storm waves.

Japan has a section of seacoast which has so often been a victim of such waves that a plan is being considered to remove some of its settlements to safer places. More than 50 villages along the "tidal wave coast" of northeastern Honshu will be transferred to new inland sites if the plan is approved by the Japanese parliament.

Northeastern Honshu is one of the most picturesque and truly oriental sections of the main island of the Japanese group. Unlike the regions around Tokyo and Yokohama, only slightly more than 150 miles to the south, Northeastern Honshu has been little changed by Western influences.

Coast Dotted with Fishing Villages

Roads are narrow and unpaved; motor cars have not yet driven ox-carts and bicycles from the transportation field; Western fashions have failed to make an impression upon the people; European-plan hotels are practically unknown; and only a few farmers have adopted modern farming methods.

The coast, which has felt the full effect of several tidal waves, is dotted with fishing villages. Many small harbors offer havens for large fleets of picturesque Japanese boats whose operators derive a livelihood from large hauls of mackerel, sardines, cod, bonito, squid, and herring that swarm the coastal waters.

At the backdoors of the fishing villages begins a vast agricultural region spreading to the foot of the lofty mountain range that forms Honshu's backbone. These rolling hills are famous for beautiful panoramas and are visited annually by thousands of Japanese tourists.

Traveling along the network of roads, one passes through quaint villages, well-kept orchards of peach, pear and apple trees, and vast farm areas that have been cultivated with such precision that the plots appear as though they have been worked with a comb and brush. Much of the farming area is in rice, which ranks with the finest rice grown in Japan, while other leading crops are wheat, potatoes, soy beans, and tobacco. Many fruit trees and vegetables in this region are from slips and seeds obtained in the United States.

Hills Give up Valuable Minerals

The few spots that are not cultivated are occupied by small forests. In the summer, they are ablaze with color. Clematis, spiraea, hydrangea, and a host of other flowers thrive under the protecting boughs of tall conifers, Spanish chestnut trees, and birches. Here and there the hills are flecked with mining camps, for gold and silver have been mined in this region, and copper, coal, iron, and sulphur still are important mineral products.

Sendai, which, in a commercial way, probably has felt the effects of tidal waves and earthquakes more than any other large city in northeast Honshu, is the most important city in northern Japan. It has 143,000 inhabitants and is the leading market of the coastal region.

Sendai is the capital of Miyagi Province, and is situated in a vast fertile plain. It is the starting point for excursions into northeast Honshu. The famous Matsushima Bay, which the Japanese will tell you is one of the world's beauty spots,

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As many letters as desired may be sent by those wishing to secure cancellations at the Little America Post Office. You may address letters to yourself or to friends.

The addressed letters (without stamps) should be enclosed in another envelope with the usual postage affixed, addressed to the "Byrd Antarctic Expedition, c/o Postmaster, Washington, D. C." Enclose also a post office money order payable to the Byrd Antarctic Expedition, Washington, D. C., for 53 cents for each letter.

The Expedition stamps will be placed on the enclosed letters *in the Washington Post Office* and the letters forwarded to the Little America Post Office for postmarking and return.

Among the distinguished personages who are to receive covers from Little America with the first cancellation are: President of the United States, King George V of England, Postmaster General Farley, Secretary of the Interior Ickes, Will Rogers, Mayor-elect LaGuardia of New York, and scores of others. Letters addressed to practically every country in the world have been received for cancellation at Little America.

Note: Students and teachers preparing units of work about Antarctica, in connection with the Byrd and the Lincoln Ellsworth Antarctic expeditions, will find helpful photographs and other information about the least-known continent in "Conquest of Antarctica by Air," *National Geographic Magazine*, August, 1930; and "Mapping the Antarctic from the Air," October, 1932.

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN: "Admiral Byrd Takes Dogs as Well as Planes to Antarctic," week of October 16, 1933; and "Little America, Antarctica, Gets a Postmaster!" week of October 30, 1933.

The National Geographic Society has recently published a New Map of the Antarctic, containing all place names and routes of each important exploration of the continent. This map may be secured for 50 cents postpaid for the paper edition and 75 cents postpaid for the linen edition, from the Washington, D. C., headquarters of the National Geographic Society.

Bulletin No. 2, December 18, 1933.

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"TRY ADMIRAL BYRD, LITTLE AMERICA"

Third Assistant Postmaster General, Clinton B. Eilengerger, in charge of the Stamp Division, suggests a destination for a letter with the cryptic address: "South Latitude 78° 35'; West Longitude 163° 40'." More than 52,000 letters have been forwarded to the world's southernmost post office.

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The San Blas, Indians With a "Superiority Complex"

A MYSTERIOUS plague has taken a toll of more than 100 lives among the San Blas Indians of Panama. This news item is of more than usual interest because the San Blas are unique among the coastal aborigines of both the Americas in remaining pure racially.

This is all the more remarkable, students of Indian affairs say, because the San Blas inhabit the portion of the mainland first visited by Europeans and first selected for colonization. Also because control by Europeans has actually been in force all around them for more than 400 years.

The part of Panama which is usually spoken of more or less loosely as "the San Blas territory" begins about 60 miles east of the Atlantic end of the Canal and extends on eastward toward the Colombian border. It also extends an indefinite distance inland.

Live in "New World Venice"

The typical San Blas Indians, however, are a sea-island people. The center of their activity, on the numerous small islands in the Gulf of San Blas, is a sort of New World Venice (see illustration, page 2).

Like true Venetians, they seem to have taken up their abode on these islands as a measure of defense against their warlike kinsmen of the interior. The islands are dwelling places, and the Indians that inhabit them cross over to the mainland by day to harvest yams, plantains and other vegetables and fruits from their jungle clearings, and to gather ivory nuts and other jungle products. Some of the Indians also live in villages along the coast of the mainland.

The San Blas Indians are not savages. They are at least semi-civilized, and are an orderly people not given to annoying their neighbors. They have fought much during the past four centuries, but it has been the fighting of a people with their backs to a wall, who believe the wall is theirs, and who mean to defend it.

Have Never Been Conquered

The outward attitude of the San Blas Indians might be described by a phrase borrowed from the new psychology. They seem to have developed a strong "superiority complex." When the Spaniards began settling the Isthmus they could not see why their affairs should be interfered with, and they set the Spaniards down as their implacable enemies.

All efforts to conquer them or to mix with them were unsuccessful. They were pushed farther back, but always managed to hold for their own a considerable territory. Finally the Spanish settlers entered into a treaty with the San Blas people agreeing to remove all forts from their territory and granting them a sort of autonomy, or self-government.

When the Isthmus passed to Colombia the San Blas maintained much the same attitude toward the Colombians that they had maintained toward the Spaniards; and when Panama became independent in 1903 they held aloof also from the new government. They have had their own chiefs and have had little or nothing to do with the Panaman Government.

It has been the boast of the San Blas that their race has remained absolutely pure—that there is no such thing as a half-breed San Blas. This is the more remarkable because of the many racial mixtures nearby, where fusions of whites, Indians and negroes are to be found.

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is but a few miles from the city. In feudal times Sendai was the seat of the *Date* family which, until a few hundred years ago, was one of the most powerful in Japan. Fukushima, which has also felt severe earth tremors, is an industrial city south of Sendai. Here silk is produced from the cocoon stage to bolts of cloth that appear on department store shelves.

Note: Other Japanese pictures and data may be consulted in the following articles: "Japan, Child of the World's Old Age" and "Motor Trails in Japan," *National Geographic Magazine*, March, 1933; "Tokyo To-day," February, 1932; "The First Airship Flight Around the World," June, 1930; "Some Impressions of 150,000 Miles of Travel," May, 1930; "Sakurajima, Japan's Greatest Volcanic Eruption," April, 1924; "The Empire of the Risen Sun" and "How the Earth Telegraphed Its Tokyo Quake to Washington," October, 1923; "Some Aspects of Rural Japan," September, 1922; "The Geography of Japan," July, 1921; and "The Making of a Japanese Newspaper," October, 1920.

Bulletin No. 3, December 18, 1933.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

The attached blank may be used in ordering Bulletins for the coming year:

School Service Department,
National Geographic Society,
Washington, D. C.

Kindly send.....copies weekly of the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS for the school year of 1933-34 for classroom use, to

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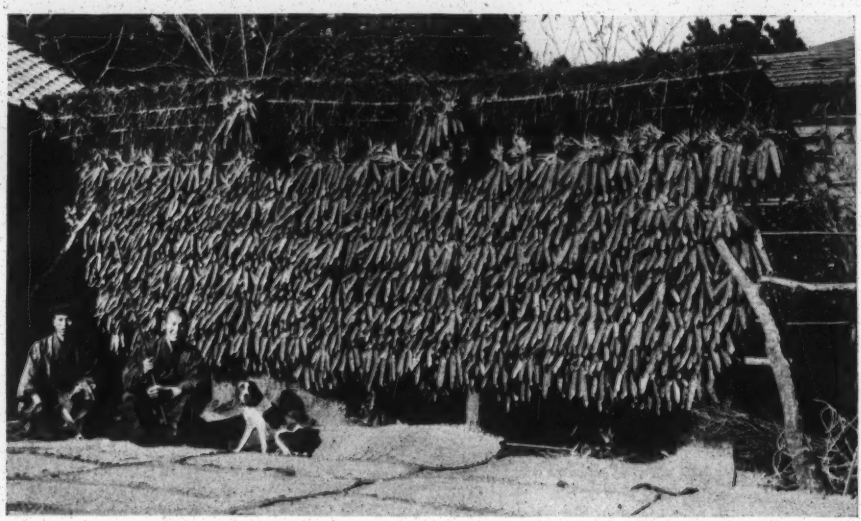
City..... State.....

I am a teacher in.....School.....grade

Enclose 25 cents for each annual subscription.



Photograph by A. Nielen

IN NORTHERN JAPAN CORN IS HUNG OUT TO DRY LIKE CLOTHES

This method of ripening and curing grain is necessary in districts where rains are excessive and summers short. Note the thatch roof to ward off sudden showers.

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Amoy, Tea Town That Is Center of New Chinese Revolt

CHINESE rebel forces have seized the custom house of Amoy, chief seaport of Fukien Province, and launched a secessionist movement against the Nanking government. In Shanghai, 500 miles north of Amoy, martial law prevails each night between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. while troop trains pass through the city en route to the newest Chinese trouble zone.

Amoy is noted for its harbor, which also is mentioned in American history books as the port from which the tea that figured in the Boston Tea Party, of Revolutionary War fame, was shipped.

The city enjoys the best-developed commercial center between Hong Kong, 300 miles south, and Shanghai, 500 miles north. About 125 miles to the east, across Taiwan Strait, lies the large island of Formosa, the world's chief source of natural camphor.

Tea Trade Has Dwindled

Once Amoy was the most important tea export center in the world. But Amoy's great expanse of sheltered water floats few tea shipments to-day. The greatest blow to the trade came in 1894 when Japan took possession of Formosa (Taiwan), where most of the Amoy tea originated. Tea from Fukien Province still finds its way to the world's tea cups by way of Amoy, but the traffic is a mere trickle compared to the flow of dried leaves through the port in its palmiest days.

Amoy is situated on an island 35 miles in circumference, which lies three miles off the mainland of Fukien. Arms from the mainland and rows of small islands almost inclose an extensive bay which forms Amoy's admirable harbor. Because of its excellence, the port was chosen in 1908 as a place of entertainment for one of the sections of the United States round-the-world fleet.

The city, composed of old and new towns, has not been much affected by Western architecture, except for a few warehouses, branches of foreign banks and steamship companies, and a handful of other business buildings. Both sections of the city, in the main, are made up of low, congested structures, separated by very narrow, crooked streets. The towns ramble up steep hillsides, and no wheeled vehicles can be used in most of the streets.

Europeans Live on Small Island

Amoy's sanitary conditions are bad from a Western point of view, and its air is laden with noxious odors. Plagues, costing thousands of lives, have broken out on numerous occasions.

The European and American population, amounting to only a few hundreds, has solved the problem of living conditions by constructing a residence suburb on a little island, Kolongsu, across half a mile of salt water from Amoy. This community, with its pleasant homes and shaded streets, is considered a paradise by Westerners who must spend part of their time in the congested city.

Amoy, in its heyday, had a population of more than 300,000. With the passing of its trade, the figure has dropped to 114,000. Tens of thousands of Fukinese pass through the port of Amoy yearly on their ways to the Straits Settlements and the Dutch East Indies.

Though it has a fine natural harbor and a strategic trade location opposite the

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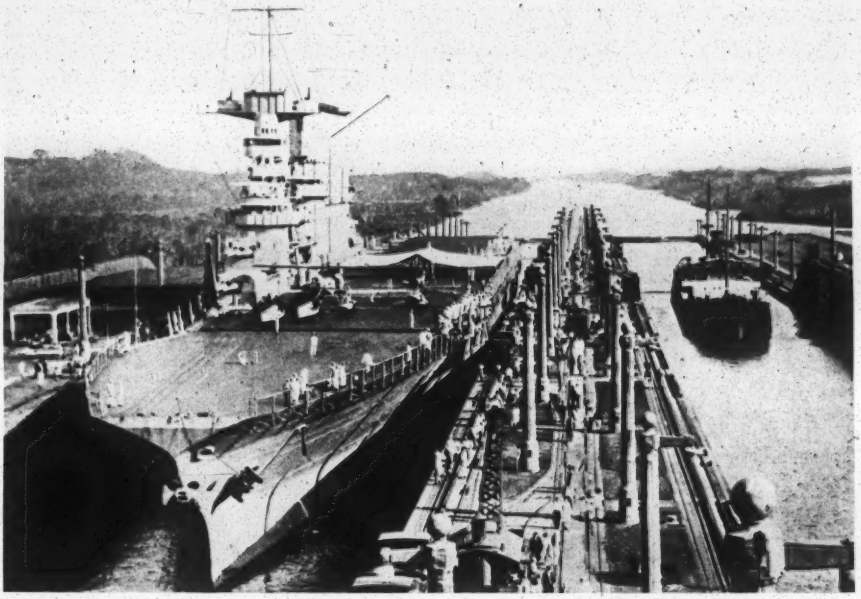
The San Blas Indians have gained a reputation for being unfriendly. This is not exactly an accurate estimate. They have learned to be suspicious of strangers, and they will take no chances. Those having errands, such as traders, are treated courteously, but there is an unvarying rule that no stranger shall remain ashore in their country over night. They look upon their land as community property, but those who clear a space have a recognized title to it while they use it. If a clearing is abandoned, it again becomes community property. Fruit trees planted by an individual become his property.

Living, as they do, near the water, the San Blas are thoroughly at home in that element, being excellent swimmers and canoeists. The children are given tiny canoes as soon as they are large enough to wield a little paddle, and are skilled boatmen at an early age. The San Blas are sturdy and strong but of low stature, hardly averaging 5 feet in height. There is a tradition that they not only go into the jungle to gather nuts and fruits, but also to work secret gold mines. They use a considerable amount of gold in personal adornment, but whether their ornaments are heirlooms, or whether fresh gold is constantly made into these baubles, has not been determined.

Note: For other Panama Canal photographs and information about the natives of the Isthmus of Panama consult the following: "Modern Saga of the Seas," *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1931; "Some Impressions of 150,000 Miles of Travel," May, 1930; "Flying the World's Longest Air-Mail Route," March, 1930; "To Bogotá and Back by Air," May, 1928; "How Latin America Looks from the Air," October, 1927; "Who Treads Our Trails," September, 1927; "Map-Changing Medicine," September, 1922; "The Jungles of Panama," February, 1922; "Nature's Transformation at Panama," August, 1915; "Redeeming the Tropics," March, 1914; and "Little-Known Parts of Panama," July, 1912.

The older issues may be consulted in the bound files of the *National Geographic Magazine* in your school or local library.

Bulletin No. 4, December 18, 1933.



Photograph by Wide World

A "CLOSE SQUEEZE"; THE "SARATOGA" GOES THROUGH THE BIG DITCH

When the Panama Canal was being built, engineers found in the edge of the San Blas Indian country a huge deposit of sand perfectly suited for concrete mixing. But the San Blas would not sell. "If your God had meant for you to have it," a San Blas chief told the Americans, "He would have put it at Colon, not in the land of the San Blas."

middle of Formosa, Amoy suffers from its hinterland's poverty. Fukien, of which it is the port, is one of the least-developed regions of eastern China. It is mountainous and its valleys once were fertile, but centuries of cultivation have nearly exhausted the soil.

Jasmine to Flavor Tea

Because the mountain ranges parallel the coast, rivers are short and the interior is inaccessible. There are practically no roads; only narrow footpaths, raised a foot or so above the fields. One writer says, "The only commissioner of their highways is the tramp of ceaseless thousands bearing their heavy burdens over them, from one generation to another." There are no fences and no signposts.

In fields adjacent to the tea plantations of Fukien Province, jasmine plants are trained over trellises. The fragrant flowers are used to flavor the finer grades of tea leaves.

Note: See also "The Geography of Money," *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1927; "Among the People of Cathay," June, 1927; "The Races of Domestic Fowls" and "Farmers Since the Days of Noah," April, 1927; and "Scenes in the Celestial Republic," February, 1926.

Bulletin No. 5, December 18, 1933.

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HOW POULTRY COMES TO TOWN IN FUKIEN PROVINCE

Although this big division of China lies on the eastern seaboard, its interior is poorly developed. There are almost no roads; footpaths, such as that shown above, serve the commerce of the region.